A ROOM of CLOUDS

~Part 1 of 2~

古屋兎丸
Furuya Usamaru Presents

Today, I'm day-dreaming about clouds again.

Rapoumon no shita ni tachi kakurete taterike rum ..

Kyou ni agarikeru otoko no, hi mo imada kurezari kereba...

Ima wa mukashi, settsu no kuni no atari yori numisen ga tame ni...*

* See text file for explanation

1

So I just daydream about clouds during the lectures.

I have no idea what's going on in class.

雨のおと

～前篇～

ハピネス happiness scene—2—

古屋兎丸

スピリッツにて「π-パイ-」好評連載中

Translation
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KOTONOHA
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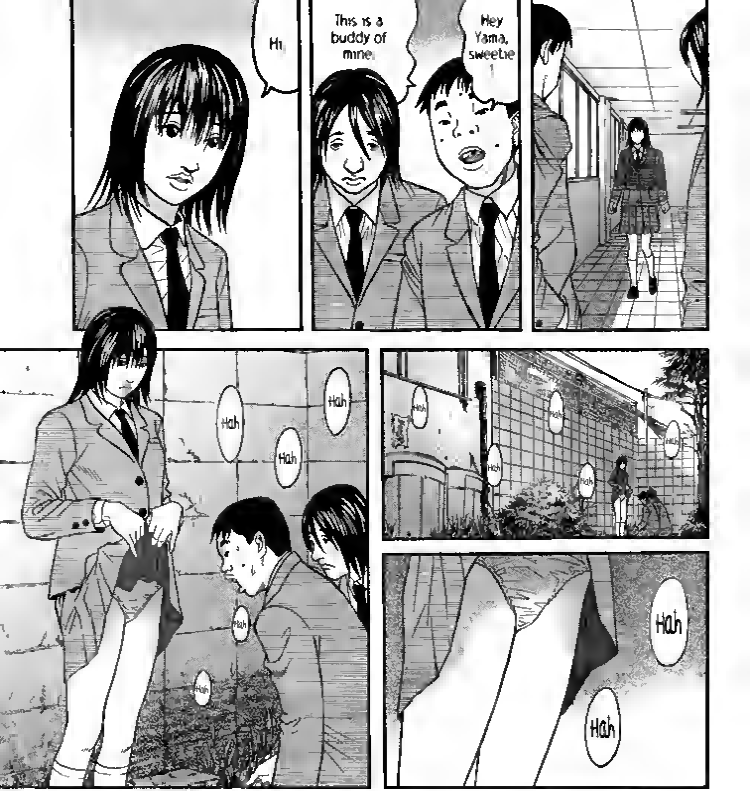
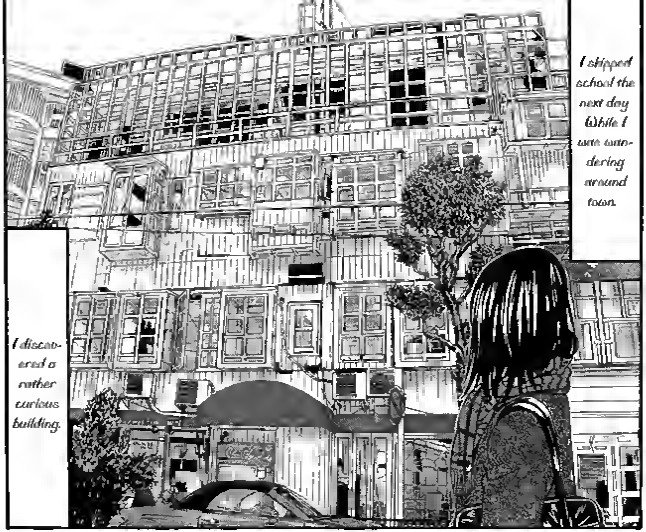

Hi
This is a buddy of mine.
Hey Yama, sweetie
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah

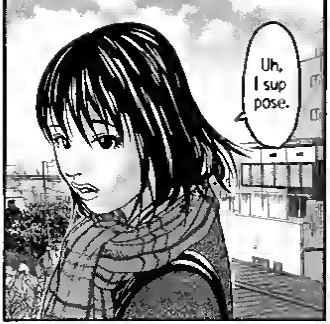
I let boys who I've been friends with since elementary school feel at my panties.
Wow

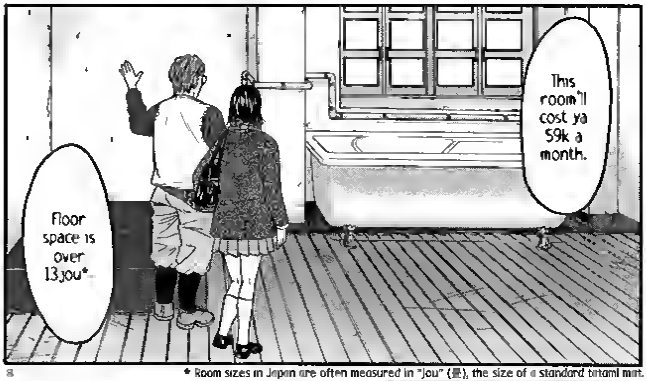
Bwah hah hah hah ..
Hah hah hah ...
Tee hee hee
Hey Yaaar ma
Yeah ?
That's gotta be cold!
Hah hah hah ...
I like to think of the clouds
At times like these
4
World History, 15%.
Modern Literature, 12%.
English, 10%.
Mathematics, 0%.

I can't even call these "grades."
They're just too horrible
My apologies, I have such a stupid daughter..
Even with the reduced competition for places these days...
There's no way she'll be able to enter university with these grades.
I must have brought her up badly..
It's all your fault that I was humiliated!
It's all your fault that I feel terrible now! If I get sick and die, it will be all your fault!
What are you gonna do once you get out of high school?
Umm... Well..
5
I'm a stupid girl so it's all my fault
It's all my fault that Mom feels terrible


I skipped school the next day while I was wandering around town.
I discovered a rather curious building.

If you're here for an inspection, the model room's over here

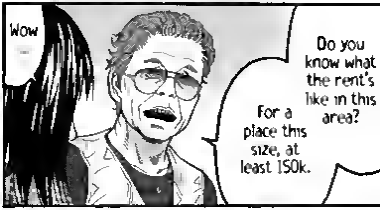




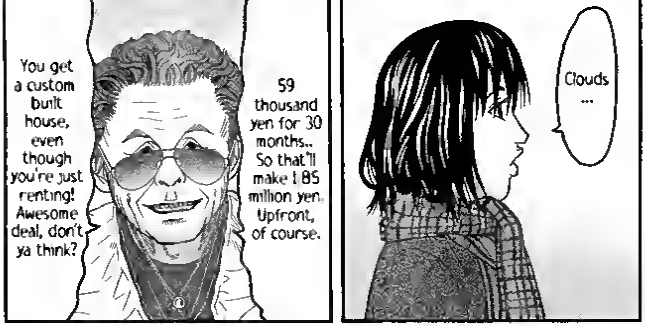
8

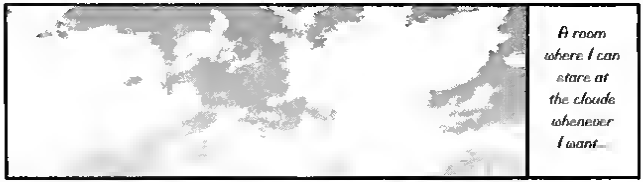
* Room sizes in Japan are often measured in "jou" (畳), the size of a standard tatami mat.

Look around, there's nothing in the room yet, right?
Using the last six months of payment, I'll renovate the room to exactly the way you want it.



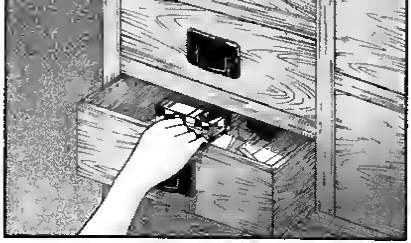
I love clouds.
Clouds
So, what do you like?
If you like movies, I can install a gigantic TV screen. If you like music, I can soundproof the whole room
Anything's possible!
I like...
We can remove the entire ceiling!
Well, how 'bout this?
Clouds?
Ah, clouds!
You'll be able to stare up at the clouds any time you want. Fantastic, isn't it!?
Of course, we'll put in blinds too, so you'll still be able to darken the room.
In its place, we can just put in a massive glass ceiling!


You get a custom built house, even though you're just renting! Awesome deal, don't ya think?
59 thousand yen for 30 months.. So that'll make 1.85 million yen. Upfront, of course.
Clouds ...


A room where I can stare at the clouds whenever I want...

When that happens, please remember the 3 years you spent working hard here
There will be a time in your life when you will be able to spread your wings wide...

I guess it was all my fault that they weren't feeling well enough to come
Neither Mom, Dad, or Sis come to my graduation ceremony



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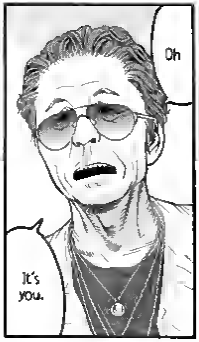
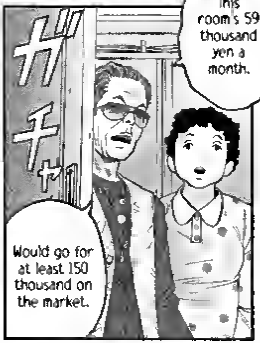
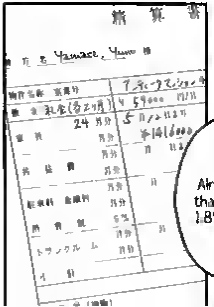
I'm sorry for being so useless... I'm sorry for being so stupid I'm sorry for taking your money...
Mom, Dad, Sis... Goodbye

Clouds...

Where should I go now...?


Oh
It's you.


This room's 59 thousand yen a month.
Would go for at least 150 thousand on the market.


精算書

1.84
Alright, that's all 1.85 mil.
1.83

Umm ..
Uh ..

The two years starts from today.

Hello? This is Antique Mansions.
Yeah, for 30 months of rent, I can put together anything. I'm coming over now

Hey, I need to go out for a bit, so get outta here!
S sorry ..

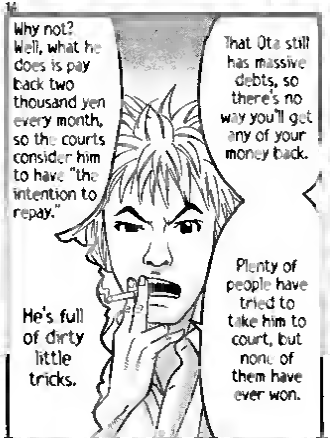
That guy, Ota, might overhear us here, so come inside.
Huh ?

Aah ...

What ?
Hey you
Don't tell me you were scammed too?

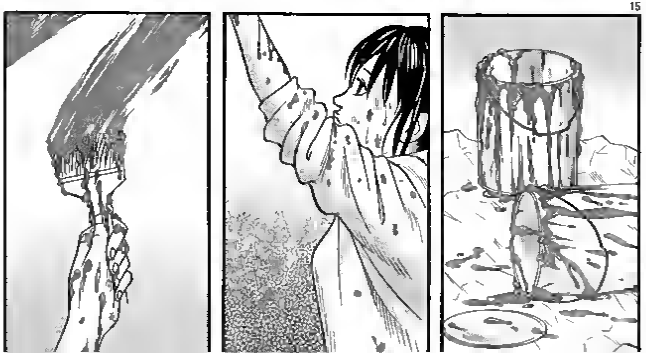
That's what everyone calls me at least. Yama.
I'm Yama.
I'm Hikaru. Nice to meet you.

Yeah. But it does have a light bulb
That room's got nothing in it. No water, no gas, not even a toilet.
I see... So you've already paid all of it.


Why not? Well, what he does is pay back two thousand yen every month, so the courts consider him to have "the intention to repay."
That Ota still has massive debts, so there's no way you'll get any of your money back.
He's full of dirty little tricks.
Plenty of people have tried to take him to court, but none of them have ever won.

Heck, I had to do everything in this room myself, walls and everything.
Ota charges as much as he can, but he'll never fix up the room like he promises to.

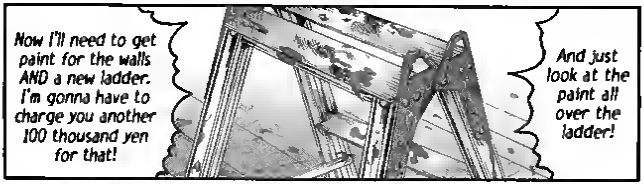
Anyway, I'll help you out as much as I can.
You'll just have to put up with it and do the best you can.
Okay ..
I won't be getting a room where I can watch the clouds..
So that means ...
Hikaru talked about some really tricky stuff so I went back to my room to think about things.
!
I've got a great idea!

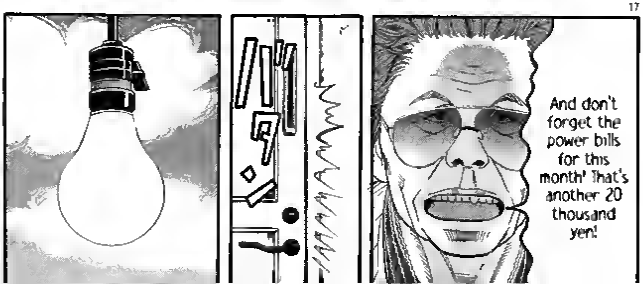


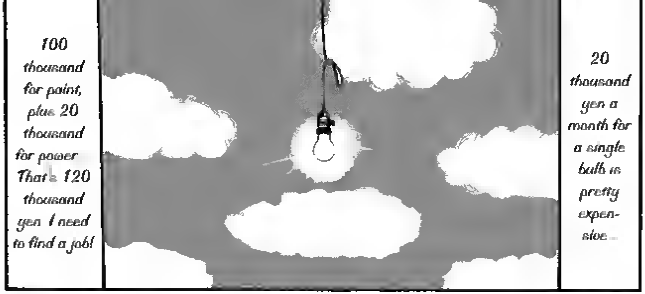
With the money left in the bank account, I bought some paint and painted a sky full of clouds on the ceiling...

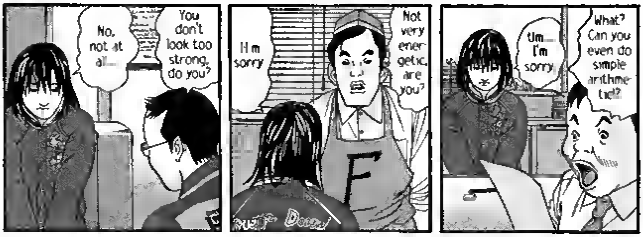
Whatcha doing, missy?
Yow, yow, yow ...
Yes?
ドーン ドーン

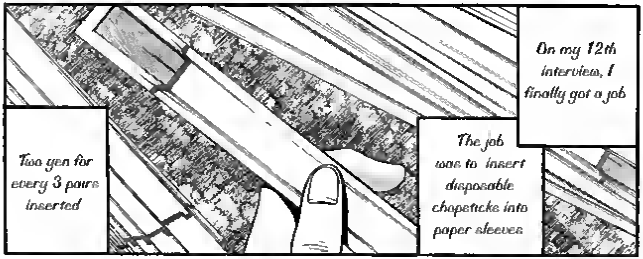
The clouds ..
But mister ...
This is just ridicu lous!
Painting the room like that, what am I supposed to do when I need to show the room to another potential tenant?


Now I'll need to get paint for the walls AND a new ladder. I'm gonna have to charge you another 100 thousand yen for that!
And just look at the paint all over the ladder!


And don't forget the power bills for this month! That's another 20 thousand yen!


100 thousand for paint, plus 20 thousand for power That's 120 thousand yen I need to find a job!
20 thousand yen a month for a single bath is pretty expensive...


No, not at all...
You don't look too strong, do you?
Hm sorry
Not very energetic, are you?
Um... I'm sorry
What? Can you even do simple arithmetic!

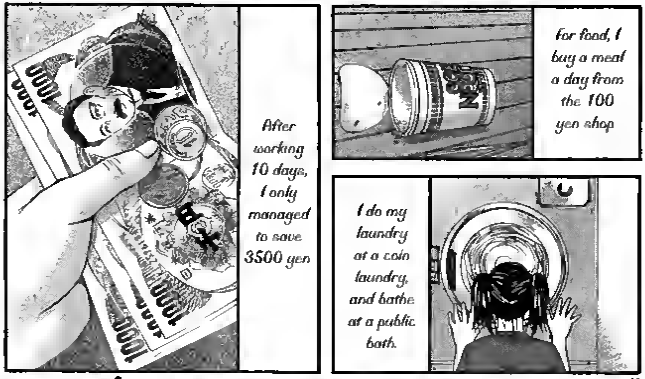

On my 12th interview, I finally got a job
Two yen for every 3 pairs inserted
The job was to insert disposable chopsticks into paper sleeves

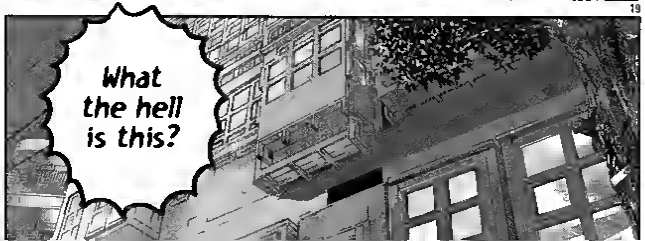
18

* Ex Morning Musume pop idol

Everyone at work is really nice. It's really fun
Oh, really ?
I'm gonna marry Natsumi Abe*!
Oh ...
Hey Yama! Guess what? I was bought some shiny stones!

I'm starving
Since I have no water or toilet in my room, I go to the toilet and drink water in the park nearby.
But even though I worked hard for 6 long hours, I had only done about 1500 pairs.
Which came to just 1000 yen for a day's work.

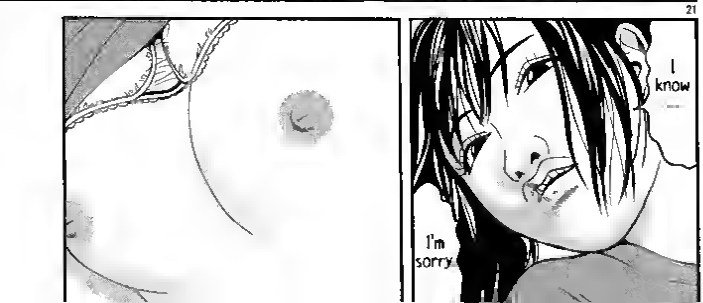

After working 10 days, I only managed to save 3500 yen
For food, I buy a meal a day from the 100 yen shop
I do my laundry at a coin laundry, and bathe at a public bath.


What the hell is this?

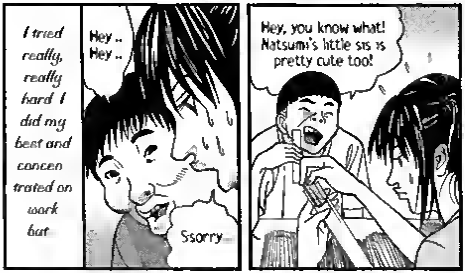
I'm sorry.
Uh... Um... But I'm doing my best! I'm working every day...
You promised to pay 120k by today, didn't you!?
This is only 3500 yen!
Queen

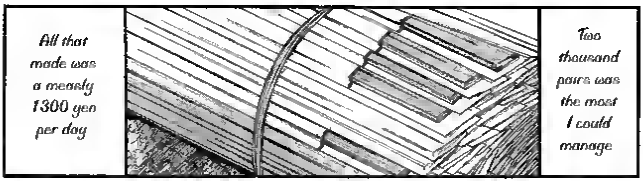
Nice and tender.
You're still 18, right?
In exchange, you'll have to do just as I say
Oh well, I guess there's nothing I can do but give you another week.
and sit next to me.
Come over.

Ah...
Um...
Uh...
Be quiet!
Don't forget I'm givin' you another week!
If it's anyone's fault, it's yours!

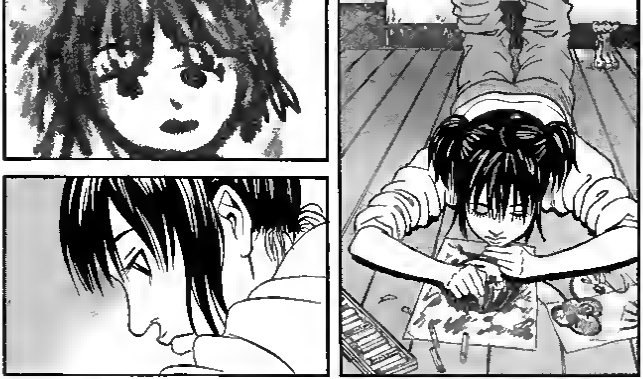

I know
I'm sorry

Well, at least he'll wait for another week.
Just like those boys at school, Mr Ota got to do what he wanted with me.

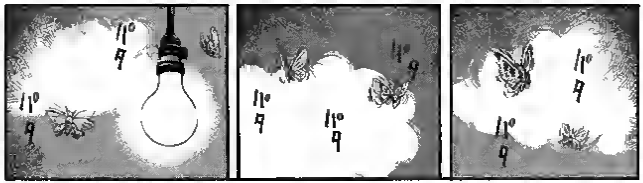

I tried really, really hard. I did my best and concentrated on work but
Hey.. Hey..
Ssorry
Hey, you know what! Natsumi's little sis is pretty cute too!
Really
I'm good friend's with Mr Ant, y'know!

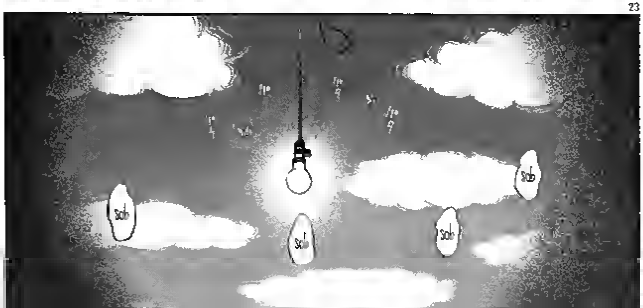

All that made was a measly 1300 yen per day
Two thousand yen was the most I could manage

The skin on my fingertips is peeling

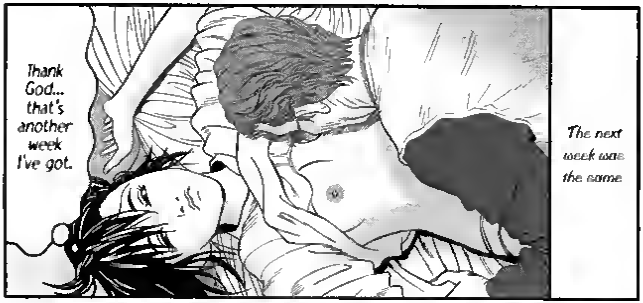


But I'm so bad at it, it's sad
Sob
Sob
Sob
Pictures I love drawing pictures




Sob
Sob
Sob
Sob

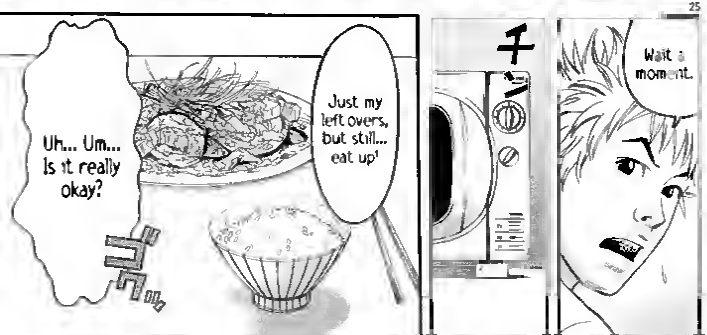
I'm sorry ...
Yes ...
This is just 5000 yen, isn't it?
Again?


Thank God... that's another week I've got.
The next week was the same

Pretty soon, a whole month had passed since I had entered the 'Antique Mansion"

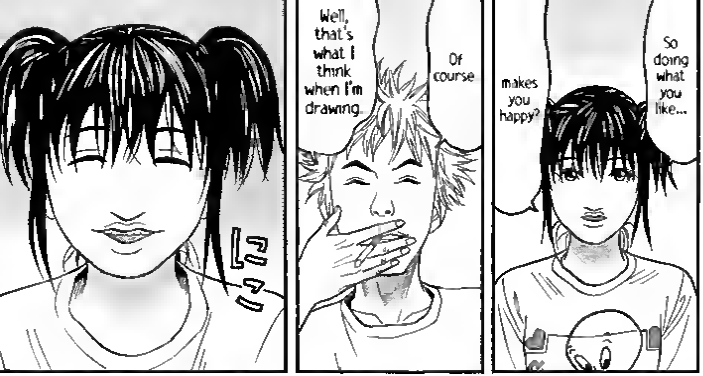
That's not what I call "fine"!
Mm hmm, things are... fine ...
Whuh ...
Oh, hi Hikaru.
Have ya gotten used to life 'round here yet?

Sorry
Yes.
What? You haven't eaten anything this entire week!?

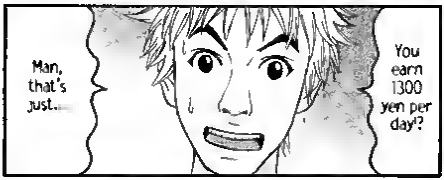

Uh... Um... Is it really okay?
Just my left overs, but still... eat up!
Wait a moment.

I haven't ever had anything this good!
はぐ
はぐ
Yeah!
It's good right?
ガツ
ガツ
ガツ
ムニャ
ムニャ
You want some bread too?
Yes!
Hah hah !
Yup
I love drawing pictures too.
ふーん
Wow... So you want to be a manga artist?

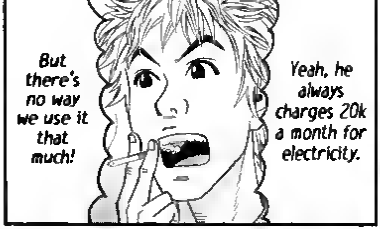
But I'm happy because I like what I'm doing.
I'm not that good either ..
'cos I draw so poorly...
But whenever I look at my pictures, I start feeling sad.


So doing what you like... makes you happy?
Of course
Well, that's what I think when I'm drawing.

I really like clouds!
I like omelettes too!
But I don't like smoking.
Sorry 'bout that.


You earn 1300 yen per day!?
Man, that's just...

Well, it makes no difference if I cook for two or one... So starting from tomorrow, come over and eat at my place!
Okay ?
Really? You'll do that for me?
Cool! That's super cool!


But there's no way we use it that much!
Yeah, he always charges 20k a month for electricity.

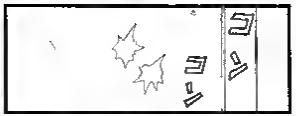
From the next day, I always went over to Hikaru's place to eat

Yeah ...
もぐ

もぐ
もぐ

.....
It must be so easy being a girl...
But it's pretty nice of him to wait so long for the 120k ...

♪
♫
Somehow, we spent more and more time together.


ヨーソロー

I was drawing
Home delivery!
What ya up to?

Yama, this room's fantastic!
It really makes you feel like you're sleeping outside.
I wish I could ride on clouds.
Haha...
If someone could, it'd be you, Yama.
Me...
I like you, Yama.
I like you too, Hikaru.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE, SHE HAD SOMETHING TO CHERISH.
BUT THE MORE PRECIOUS SOMETHING IS, THE EASIER IT IS TO BREAK...

they had turned into clouds of pure white

Those black clouds that had been building up inside of me

TO BE CONTINUED...